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# Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Somalia

## I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to the statement of the President of the Security Council of 31 October 2001 (S/PRST/2001/30). The report provides an update on developments in and related to Somalia since my last report of 9 June 2004 (S/2004/469). The main focus of the report is the progress achieved at the Somali National Reconciliation Conference at Mbagathi, Somalia, under the auspices of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), with Kenya as Chairman. The report also provides an update on developments inside Somalia, the security situation and the humanitarian and development activities of United Nations programmes and agencies.

## II. Somali National Reconciliation Conference

2. At the end of June 2004, owing to controversies regarding the method of selection of members of the transitional federal parliament, many Somali leaders absented themselves from the Somali National Reconciliation Conference. However, concerted efforts by the member States of IGAD, especially their Ministers for Foreign Affairs, led to a gradual return of those leaders to the Conference in July. The Ministers also called for the early arrival of traditional leaders at the Conference site and for Somali political leaders to cooperate in the process of selecting the members of parliament. They warned that absent leaders would not be allowed to hold the peace process hostage and that punitive measures would be taken against those obstructing its completion.

3. Each Somali clan (Hawiye, Darod, Digil and Mirifle, Dir and the "Allied" clans) was requested to submit a list of names to form the Somali National Arbitration Committee and the collective leadership of the Conference, which is called the Presidium. Each clan was requested to submit a list of 61 members of parliament by 5 July, with the exception of the "Allied" clans which was asked to submit a list of 31 members of parliament.

4. On 8 July, I addressed the Somali delegates at the Conference. I reiterated the commitment of the United Nations to support the outcome of the Conference, but underlined that the ultimate responsibility for achieving an all-inclusive government and making it work rested on Somali shoulders. I urged the delegates to make every

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effort to achieve the goal set by the Ministers of the member States of IGAD for the Conference and to establish an inclusive governance structure as soon as possible.

5. The distribution of the seats allotted to the clans was a complex exercise. Negotiations on the number of seats to be allotted to each of the sub-clans proved challenging. However, the IGAD Ministers maintained regional cohesion, holding no fewer than six ministerial meetings in Nairobi over a period of five months. Their collective efforts and the sense of compromise among the Somali leaders helped to bring about a resolution to the problem, at times with the assistance of the Somali Arbitration Committee, made up of members from all of the clans.

6. At the tenth IGAD Ministerial Facilitation Committee meeting, held in Nairobi on 21 and 22 August, the Ministers focused mainly on facilitating the selection of Somali members of parliament. They also discussed the report of a 14-member team from the African Union (AU) that visited Somalia from 7 to 17 August. The team visited Bardera, Garbaharey, Baidoa, Beletwein, Kismayo, Bu'ale, Mogadishu, Jowhar, Galkayo and Garowe.

7. On 22 August, 194 members of the Transitional Federal Parliament were sworn into office in a ceremony presided over by the Kenyan Minister for East African and Regional Cooperation and the Chairman of the IGAD Ministerial Facilitation Committee at the United Nations Office at Nairobi. Differences within the Harti sub-clan (Darod) over their choice were resolved after the intervention of the Kenyan President, Mwai Kibaki, and international observers. On 29 August, an additional 66 members of parliament were sworn in in the presence of the Kenyan Vice-President, who declared the Parliament formally inaugurated. Subsequently, contestation over the remaining seats was also resolved. As of mid-September, 268 out of a total of 275 members of parliament had been sworn in, leaving seven members, who, for reasons of ill health or logistical problems, were prevented from travelling to Nairobi to be sworn in.

8. On 2 September, the Parliament held its first meeting in Nairobi. Farah Hirsi Bulhan, 83 years old and the eldest Somali member of parliament, was chosen as the interim speaker. A parliamentary agenda was issued and five of the remaining members of parliament were sworn in. At its third meeting, on 7 September, the members endorsed the rules of procedure and agreed that the speaker and other principal officials would be elected on 15 September.

9. On 15 September, IGAD Ministers and international observers witnessed the election of Sharif Hassan Sheikh Aden as speaker of the Parliament, with 161 votes. Elected from a field of 11 candidates, he was chosen ahead of Sheikh Aden Mohamed Nur, who obtained 105 votes. Two hundred and sixty-six out of the 275 members of parliament participated in the voting. They decided to postpone the election of a transitional president until 10 October, so that candidates could have enough time to campaign.

10. At two press conferences, on 17 August and 12 September, a group of Somali women participating in the Conference underlined the failure of the sub-clans to select the requisite quota of women members of parliament. Despite the efforts of international observers, including my Representative and the staff of the United Nations Political Office for Somalia, only 23 women members of parliament were sworn in. This falls far short of the agreed 12 per cent, or 33 of the total number of 275 seats, which should have been filled by women, as stipulated by the transitional

federal charter. The problem of respecting the terms of the charter and realizing gender inclusiveness remain an outstanding issue confronting the new parliament.

11. To raise the level of inclusiveness at the Conference, and to gain support for its outcome, a dialogue with the Somali business community was held in Djibouti on 21 and 22 July under the auspices of President Ismail Omar Guelleh. President Guelleh, the Djibouti Minister for Foreign Affairs and ministers from Ethiopia and Kenya as well as staff of the United Nations Political Office for Somalia urged the prominent Somali businessmen and women to support the peace process. Thirty-six of them signed a statement committing themselves to financially support the Conference and its outcome.

12. The absence of General Mohamed Hersi "Morgan" from the Conference and reports that he was planning a military attack on Kismayo caused concern among the civilian population of the region. General "Morgan" had been reported to be gathering his militia with the intention of attacking the Juba Valley Alliance (JVA), which had ousted him from Kismayo in 1999. The leader of JVA, Colonel Barre Hirale, now a Member of the transitional federal parliament, left the Conference and returned to Kismayo. On 27 July, the Kenyan Special Envoy and Conference Chairman, Bethuel Kiplagat, issued a press release on behalf of the IGAD Facilitation Committee, calling upon regional countries to apply targeted sanctions on General "Morgan" by, inter alia, denying him entry to any IGAD member State. Although General "Morgan" announced his intention to return to the Conference, on 14 September, he made his return conditional on Colonel Barre Hirale not attacking his militia, who, he said, were in defensive positions (see para. 24 below).

13. The question of "Somaliland" still remains a contentious issue for the future. "President" Dahir Riyale Kahin of the "Republic of Somaliland" issued a press release on 7 July, stating, "The international community is to be forewarned that any attempt to resurrect the former Somali Union would only trigger a new cycle of armed confrontation and civil war that would engulf the entire Horn of Africa region". He also stated: "The government of Somaliland noted with satisfaction numerous pronouncements from the international community, stating that the current conference, which is being held in Kenya solely to reconcile the Southern warring factions, is to be followed by the formation of a government for Somalia that would then enter into dialogue with the government of Somaliland."

## III. Activities of the United Nations and the international community

14. During the period under review, in anticipation of the establishment of a transitional federal government and institutions in Somalia, my Representative held consultations with government officials in Djibouti, Egypt, Ethiopia and Uganda. From 16 to 20 June, he met the President of Djibouti, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Egypt and the Prime Minister of Ethiopia. All of these leaders expressed full support for the IGAD peace process for Somalia, including its outcome. Officials of the League of Arab States and the African Union also stated their readiness to support the rehabilitation and reconstruction of Somalia and the demobilization, disarmament and reintegration of militias. On 21 July, my representative held talks with President Museveni, in his capacity as IGAD Chairman, in Kampala on the prospects of the IGAD-led peace process. On

11 August, he met the Chairman of the African Union, President Obasanjo, in Abuja to discuss the role of the African Union in supporting the Somali peace process. In addition to his visits to London, Paris and Washington, D.C. in February and March 2004, my Representative also visited Moscow to consult with the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation on 13 September. At these meetings, he was assured of the support of these Member States for a durable solution to the Somali problem.

15. At the initiative of the United Nations Political Office for Somalia, and as part of the International Peace Day 2003, the Spanish soccer club, Real Madrid gave scholarships to four young Somalis for a two-week summer camp in Madrid. The four young soccer players, who hailed from Hargeisa, Merca and Mogadishu, were selected following tournaments "Peace Cup" involving 384 youngsters from 24 soccer teams in different parts of Somalia over a month-long period. The United Nations Political Office for Somalia, the United Nations country team and private sector support facilitated the travel of the four young Somalis to the Real Madrid summer camp for two weeks in July 2004. The selected youngsters returned to Nairobi on 5 August after which, during press conferences both in Nairobi and in Somalia, they stated their intention to continue with the theme of International Peace Day and to serve as peace ambassadors.

16. In the meantime, the United Nations Political Office for Somalia, the United Nations country team and donors have continued their efforts to develop draft plans for supporting the future transitional federal government and institutions in Somalia in the post-Conference period. The United Nations Political Office for Somalia hosted a meeting on 10 June to discuss the peace-building challenges that the new government would face. As a result, four draft documents are being developed, including: a protocol agreement that provides a framework of cooperation on political and diplomatic matters; and a rapid assistance programme to support the transitional federal institutions in the first 6 to 12 months after the Conference. A five-year reconstruction and development programme to address the humanitarian transition to recovery and development is also being developed. Discussion is also ongoing on a framework document to outline possible coordination mechanisms between the transitional federal government and the international community. Coordination on this support framework is expected to be discussed further at a meeting in Stockholm on 29 October. The European Commission sponsored a workshop on reconciliation for Somali stakeholders in the peace process from 21 to 24 September in Naivasha, Kenya.

# IV. Developments inside Somalia

## Security

17. The security situation in Somalia remains precarious although relative peace has prevailed in "Somaliland". Occasional tension erupted in "Puntland" and outbreaks of inter- and intra-clan fighting have persisted in the central and southern parts of the country, including in Mogadishu.

18. The IGAD-led peace process has yet to have much impact on the levels of insecurity in Somalia. Most observers agree that it is unlikely to have a positive effect for some months to come. This assessment is based on the observation that

much of the insecurity stems from crime, delinquency, clashes between rival militias for control of the highways, ports and airports and other resources at the local level.

19. In Beletwein in the Hiraan region, in the dispute among the Galjeel that flared up again in July, several people were killed, in spite of an earlier accord.

20. The emergence of an administration in Merca has provided a degree of stability in the town, although on 20 July a letter was sent to the United Nations warning that the Merca airstrip should not be opened. The letter apparently came from the Bimaal Resistance Movement, which is opposed to the administration. Violence still affects other parts of the lower Shabbelle region. On 28 July, some 13 people were killed in Brava following an argument between pastoralists and farmers about the use of water. On 16 August, 15 people were killed in another dispute between farmers and pastoralists near Afgoi.

21. The conflict within the Rahanwein Resistance Army around Baidoa seems to have abated, although, the main Rahanwein clans continue to maintain militias in Baidoa. An administration has not been formed and the town and the rest of the Bay and Bakool regions do not have any form of government. Several conflicts were reported among other Rahanwein clans, triggered by disputes over resources. Examples include a violent confrontation over the charcoal trade in south-east Bakool and a land dispute that claimed several lives around the town of Dinsor. Another confrontation over control of a small village north-east of Dinsor in the Bay region resulted in the deaths of 17 people during the month of August.

22. The long-running conflict among the Marehan in northern Gedo continues, albeit at a low level of intensity. There have been several meetings among the various groups but without any real resolution to the problem, which centres on control of the border town of Belethawa. Access by humanitarian agencies to this area has been limited.

23. Sporadic violence has affected Kismayo and much of the lower Juba valley. In Jilib, the long-running conflict between the Sheikhal and the Habr Gedir has claimed many lives. On 31 August, 12 Habr Gedir gunmen (Hawiye), who were part of JVA were killed by an anti-tank mine apparently laid by the Sheikhal.

24. In late August, General "Morgan" and some 500 militia reportedly moved from their base at El Berde in north Bakool to the lower Juba region, causing concern that they were aiming at capturing Kismayo. On 15 September, Barre Hirale and his JVA militia attacked General "Morgan" some 70 kilometres outside of Kismayo. Both sides suffered casualties. Reports indicated that General "Morgan" and his militia repositioned themselves between Dodoble and Afmadow in the lower Juba region. General "Morgan" subsequently surrendered to Kenyan authorities at the Amuma border point on 24 September, and was transported to Nairobi. He has stated that he had returned to take part in the IGAD-led peace process, but he would not stand for the presidency of the transitional federal government.

25. Violence continues to blight the lives of far too many people in Mogadishu. The situation in the north of the city remains difficult, despite the end of hostilities in early June between Abgal militias loyal to Musa Sudi and his rival, Mohammed Dheere. Although, there have been no major clashes in the city since then, militias loyal to the Sharia courts have been involved in several minor clashes. In one case on 28 July, they are reported to have tortured two Somali journalists accused of filming them without permission.

26. In general, areas in the north of the country offer a more secure environment for aid operations than parts of the south where continuing instability poses greater challenges. This is far from saying, however, that the north is secure. In June, "Somaliland" authorities are reported to have arrested several members of militant groups in Burao who were alleged to be carrying explosives. Such groups, also reportedly based in Mogadishu, are believed to oppose international activity in Somalia, including the deployment of foreign troops, even as observers.

27. The dispute over control of Sanaag and Sool between "Somaliland" and "Puntland" also continues. Troops from both sides are still deployed in the region and this complicates the delivery of humanitarian aid to the region, which has been seriously affected by drought. Disputes related to land and governance issues in Bossasso have occasionally led to violence as well as to the murder of several people, including the mayor and other officials, on 28 June, and the son of a "Puntland" minister on 22 July. Tensions increased on 21 June when the "Puntland parliament" suspended the "government" of Colonel Abdullahi Yusuf, as its mandate had expired. However, Colonel Yusuf appointed a new "government" within a month. Occasional incidents related to unpaid salaries have also affected the area.

28. Disputes over resources also continue among the clans in Galgudud region. The lack of control by local authorities is illustrated by an incident on 8 September in which shots were fired at senior United Nations officials when they crossed a checkpoint between sub-clan areas while carrying out an assessment.

## V. Humanitarian situation

29. The cumulative effect of four years of drought in the Sool Plateau in northern Somalia has caused massive livestock losses among the pastoralists who make up the economic backbone of the area. This has resulted in the decimation of livelihoods, indebtedness and a general stagnation of the economy. The *gu* rains (April to July) were also scanty, extending the drought into southern "Puntland" and the central regions of Mudug and Galgaduud. Furthermore, the crop-producing regions of Gedo, lower Juba Valley and parts of Bakool in southern Somalia also had poor rainfall and harvests of only 20 per cent of the post-war average.

30. An inter-agency assessment of food, nutrition and livelihood security carried out in these areas during August concluded that some 667,000 people are in need of immediate assistance. Of that number, 261,000 are categorized as facing a humanitarian emergency and more than 355,000 are considered to be facing a livelihood crisis. The latter are likely to fall into the humanitarian emergency category if external assistance is not provided.

31. United Nations agencies and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have expanded their humanitarian operations into the newly drought-affected areas. The response includes: food relief, mobile health services and supplementary feeding, rehabilitation of water resources, veterinary services and cash-for-work projects. To date, donor response has been limited and sizeable new commitments are required to address the expanding drought situation in Somalia.

32. The situation in the lower Juba Valley is of particular concern as a second harvest failure has led to high malnutrition rates among the Bantu clans. These

communities have little recourse to alternative incomes or food and rely entirely on international assistance for survival. The current conflict between forces loyal to General "Morgan" and JVA has, as mentioned earlier (see paras. 12 and 24 above), adversely affected humanitarian operations. Several international and local staff were evacuated from the area and access is severely limited. Some 165,800 people are directly affected in the region, and there is mounting concern that famine conditions will develop if the conflict continues. Some displacement has resulted from the fighting in the Badhade area and there are reports of civilians crossing the border into Kenya.

33. The Zayed Foundation for Charitable and Humanitarian Activities, based in the United Arab Emirates, has donated $2 million United States dollars for the improvement of the water supply in Somalia, which will address the immediate water needs for vulnerable groups, including returnees, internally displaced persons and pastoral populations in drought-stricken regions.

34. The sixth annual primary school survey for Somalia has been completed and will be published in October. The key findings of the survey indicate a slight increase of 5.3 per cent in the number of operational schools, and an increase of 5.7 per cent in enrolment, bringing the estimated gross enrolment rate to 19.9 per cent (25.5 per cent for boys and 14.3 per cent for girls). The report also indicates that girls continue to comprise only 36 per cent of total enrolment. Somalia continues to have one of the lowest school enrolment rates in the world.

35. There are few efforts currently under way in Somalia that provide psychosocial care and support to marginalized and vulnerable children or to child-victims of violence, abuse and exploitation. A child rights network has been established in Baidoa, composed of key stakeholders in the field of human rights, education, youth and HIV/AIDS. The network aims to support civil society efforts to carry out activities and advocacy initiatives to protect children. Similar child protection networks have met regularly in the Bari, Nugal, Mudug, Benadir, Lower Shabelle and Hiran regions, as well as in Hargeisa, and are undertaking specific activities to protect vulnerable and marginalized children.

36. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) has repatriated a total of 9,222 Somali refugees (1,846 families) from Ethiopia and Djibouti to northern Somalia. As a result, the refugee camp of Hartisheikh, Ethiopia, was officially closed in June.

## VI. Operational activities in support of peace

37. The United Nations has begun facilitating the transfer of expertise to Somalia from the Somali diaspora through the Qualified Expatriate Somali Technical Support (QUESTS) project. The project is a modified version of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) global initiative, Transfer of Knowledge through Expatriate Nationals (TOKTEN), which encourages expatriate nationals to volunteer their expertise in the service of their homelands for short periods of time.

38. In its initial stages, the Somali project will focus on priority sectors identified by the Somali authorities and local and international humanitarian organizations in health, education and agriculture. Eligible Somali institutions in these sectors will identify immediate, short-term needs that a diaspora professional could assist them

with. Depending on funds, UNDP will support the institutions by paying the travel and living expenses required to support the individual. By supporting 10 to 15 institutions annually, UNDP aims to address three important issues, including: the reversal of the "brain drain"; support for lasting peace in Somalia; and increased participation of the Somali diaspora in the creation of a conducive environment for sustainable human resources development in the country.

39. One of the priorities stipulated in the World Bank's country re-engagement note for Somalia is the creation of an enabling environment for the livestock and meat industry. In partnership with the United Nations, phase 1 included the setting up of livestock boards in "Somaliland", "Puntland" and the Mogadishu/Benadir zones to serve as umbrella organizations providing the endorsement of health certification demanded by both importing countries and the international organizations that set and monitor livestock standards globally.

40. The boards would provide guidelines on standardization and harmonization across the region and ensure the health, quality and certification of livestock from the Horn of Africa as well as the revival and enhancement of the livelihoods of those involved in the livestock sector.

41. Livestock is one of Somalia's principal exports and the country has been severely affected by the ban on Somali livestock imports to Gulf States in 2000 following claims that animals from the region were infected with Rift Valley fever.

42. A process of gathering information known as territorial diagnosis and institutional mapping is being developed in some parts of Somalia by the United Nations. The process identifies plans and provides for subsequent implementation of leveraged and targeted follow-up of local economic development interventions for quick-starting economic opportunities and strengthening local capacities. The United Nations undertook the first exercise of this kind in "Somaliland", focusing on four locations in the Awdal region, Abdikadir, Harirad, Garbodadar and Gerisa, and is currently studying other regions of "Somaliland".

43. Based on the results of the diagnosis and mapping exercise, UNDP has also completed operational community markets in Harirad and Abdulkaadir, both in Awdal region. As such exercises are finalized for the rest of "Somaliland" and "Puntland", further microcredit activities will be supported by United Nations agencies.

44. Demand for local honey continues to exceed supply, keeping prices high. As a result, UNDP and the International Labour Organization (ILO) have extended microcredit facilities to women in the Awdal region who are engaged in beekeeping and honey hunting as a means to improve their livelihood.

45. The United Nations has launched the support for a public administration training project, which will seek to make the Somali civil service more effective in delivering services to the general public. A key component of the project is a comprehensive training needs assessment of the civil service, which was carried out, with UNDP support, in late 2003, by a team drawn from both the Civil Service Commission of "Somaliland" and private institutions.

46. Initially, the project will support the establishment of a public training institute in Hargeisa to upgrade the professional skills of a wide range of managers and administrative and clerical staff from the "Somaliland" administration. This

institute, one of the first public-private partnerships of its kind in Somalia, will be jointly run by the "Somaliland" Civil Service Commission and Hargeisa University, with UNDP support. The support for public administration training project will also investigate ways to assist the Commission in carrying out the various institutional reforms it has identified as priorities for the civil service and will contribute to the expansion and increasing professionalism of the education and training services offered by the University.

47. In the medium-term, the support for public administration training project will aim to use the expertise and skills developed during this first phase of the project to enhance the skills and consolidate the position of the transitional federal government to be formed at the Somalia National Reconciliation Conference.

48. UNDP, through its governance and financial services programme in Somalia, and working in collaboration with the United Nations Human Settlements Programme, is supporting urban sector improvement and city planning in Hargeisa. The project includes capacity-building in land management and administration and the rehabilitation of municipal infrastructure. The city charters for Hargeisa and Garowe have been prepared and work on a Hargeisa base map and the Hargeisa land survey have been completed. An assessment for the rehabilitation of the Borama municipal building has also been completed.

49. The United Nations is supporting capacity-building in governance. Thirty-seven parliamentarians have received scholarships to study law and business at Hargeisa University. Nine women leaders from "Somaliland" went on a study tour to Uganda to observe parliamentary proceedings, the role of women in decision-making and accountability measures in governance structures. Thirteen male leaders from the House of Elders (*Guurti*) went on a study tour to South Africa to observe the role of traditional leaders in government. Three workshops were held in 2004, to involve the Somali business community in the Somali peace process. The business community has supported the peace process and plans to establish a Somali Chamber of Commerce and Industry to strengthen the private sector in Somalia.

50. To contribute to the establishment of a non-gender biased justice system, six women have been awarded scholarships to attend the Faculty of Law at Hargeisa University. The six were selected by a task force composed of representatives from the "Somaliland" ministries of justice and education, civil society, the "Somaliland" Lawyers Association, UNDP and Hargeisa University.

51. There are only very few parts of Somalia that satisfy the preconditions for the preparation of demobilization activities. Significant progress was made in north-eastern Somalia, with the agreement of "Puntland" authorities, on the registration of security personnel in preparation of a transparent payroll system. This is an integral part of the preparatory project for expanded demobilization activities in the near future.

52. A pilot demobilization project, involving 300 participants, 150 active militia, 75 women and 75 men, was carried out jointly between the United Nations and a local NGO in six marginalized districts in Mogadishu from July 2003 to August 2004. At the outset, the programme collected one weapon from each participant, followed by three months of literacy, numerical, health and civics education. The participants then received four months of vocational (skills) training. Towards the

end of the project, the United Nations and the participants conducted the symbolic destruction of weapons handed in during the programme.

## VII. Observations

53. The progress witnessed in recent weeks at the Somali National Reconciliation Conference is commendable. I am grateful for the efforts of the member States of IGAD, under the leadership of Kenya, in assisting Somalis to reach the necessary agreements necessary for the re-establishment of peace and stability in the country. I urge Somali leaders to seize this opportunity to complete the process by electing a transitional president and to support in good faith the new transitional federal government that is to be formed. International support can only do so much. Somalis themselves must show seriousness if they are to re-establish peace and stability in their country.

54. The financial assistance and political support of the European Union to the Conference has been invaluable during the arduous two-year long process. I also express my appreciation to the African Union and the League of Arab States for their efforts and plans to support the establishment of peace and security in Somalia. The readiness of the African Union to deploy monitors to Somalia is a welcome initiative. The international community should support the mission of the African Union, including its disarmament, demobilization and reintegration aspects.

55. I welcome the planning efforts that are under way in Nairobi, involving the United Nations Political Office for Somalia, the United Nations country team, the Somalia Aid Coordination Body, the European Commission, the League of Arab States and others, to come up with a peace-building framework, as envisaged in the statements of the President of the Security Council of 31 October 2001 (S/PRST/2001/30) and 25 February 2004 (S/PRST/2004/3). These efforts are expected to lead to the formulation of a "rapid assistance package".

56. The funding and implementation of such a "rapid assistance package" will be of critical importance for the Somali transitional federal government, which must establish itself and start extending its authority throughout the country. I urge the international community to support the package generously and expeditiously.

57. At this stage of progress in the Somali peace process, there will likely be a call for an expanded peace-building role and presence for the United Nations, in order that it may assist the Somali parties in implementing their agreement. At the same time, it is clear that any enhanced role for the Organization in Somalia must be incremental, and should be based on the outcome of discussions with the new government. Pending my recommendations in this regard and the decisions by the Council, I propose that the resources available to the United Nations Political Office for Somalia for 2004-2005 be maintained at the current level. At this critical stage in the peace process, I can only reiterate the crucial importance of progress in the political arena being accompanied by serious efforts on the part of Somali leaders to bring about tangible improvement in the security situation on the ground. Such efforts would do much to ensure that the political agreement and the government formed on its basis receive the full support of the people of Somalia and the international community.

58. To the international community, I appeal for generous support to the Somali people at this critical juncture in their history, when they are making efforts to emerge from their long period of crisis and re-establish peace and stability.

59. The revised 2004 Inter-Agency Consolidated Appeal for Somalia calls for a total of $118 million. Despite the scale of humanitarian need in Somalia, funds received from donors continue to be limited. In 2004, both United Nations agencies and NGOs have observed a decline in funds from some key donors available for humanitarian response. While access and security continue to impose constraints on a comprehensive humanitarian response in some areas, aid agencies in Somalia have long operated under difficult circumstances to save lives and build local capacities, and they are determined to continue to do so, provided they have the resources. I again call for contributions to the revised Consolidated Appeal for Somalia commensurate with its need. Following earlier contributions to United Nations Trust Fund for Peace-Building in Somalia by Ireland ($34,668.65), Italy ($536,150.00), and Norway ($836,533.39), I am pleased to report that Italy has made an additional generous contribution of $2,239,200, for which I am most grateful.

60. In conclusion, I would like to commend the efforts of my Representative for Somalia, Winston Tubman, the staff of the United Nations Political Office for Somalia and the United Nations country team as well as the intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations engaged in Somalia for their humanitarian activities and their contribution to the international effort to help promote and support national reconciliation and peace in Somalia.